

est.  
1588

# CROFT

FAMILY PORT SHIPPERS

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** Croft has declared that it will release 2016 as a classic vintage. This is the sixth classic vintage release since Croft's return to family management in 2001. Comments on the Croft 2016 Vintage Port are as follows:

**Adrian Bridge, Managing Director:** "This is a classic Croft Vintage Port, wonderfully aromatic with a rich fruitiness and an exotic herbal character. However, it has the poise and sense of proportion characteristic of the 2106 vintage. A relatively small crop means that the amount of Vintage Port made was smaller than usual."

**David Guimaraens, Head Wine Maker:** Commenting on the viticultural year: "In spite of the hot summer, the grapes matured slowly and evenly, producing perfectly balance musts. Picking started later than usual with most estates, including Croft's Quinta da Roêda, starting their harvests in the second half of September. Notes taken at the harvest mention the fine fruit aromas of the musts and the pronounced tannins." Commenting on the wine: "The Croft 2016 is very much in style, displaying opulent fruit and a resinous herbal dimension contributed by the old vineyard at Quinta da Roêda. At the same time, it has the purity and balance which are key characteristics of the year."

**TASTING NOTE** Intense purple ruby core with vivid purple rim. The nose displays the ripe strawberry and blackcurrant fruitiness and resinous notes of rock rose and eucalyptus that are the essence of the Croft Vintage Port style. The palate opens with a surge of rich berry fruit flavour and is supported by a dense mesh of close-knit tannins. Although the wine displays some of the plump, rubenesque character of prior Croft vintages, the accent here is on symmetry and finesse. The characteristically exuberant fruit and heady herbal aromas are carefully modulated and the wine is classical in its proportions. An elegant and aromatic Vintage Port, perfectly poised between opulence and restraint.



NEW RELEASE

**CROFT  
2016  
VINTAGE**

**CASES  
PRODUCED  
3.050**

BOTTLE SIZES



**NOTES ON THE 2016 VITICULTURAL YEAR AND HARVEST**

The viticultural year in the Douro Valley began with a very wet spring. In April and May, 249mm of rain fell at Croft's Quinta da Roêda estate in the Douro Valley, nearly three times the average for the last decade. This rainfall was welcome after the very dry conditions in 2015 and helped restore ground water reserves at Roêda and throughout the Douro Valley. As a result of the cool, wet spring conditions, the ripening season started late. The first colouring of the grapes was observed around 11th July and coincided with the onset of very hot, dry weather which continued until mid-September.



During the ripening season, the weather station at Quinta da Roêda recorded 13 days with temperatures exceeding 40°C. In spite of the heat, owing to abundant ground water reserves and the late cycle, maturation was slow and even. At the end of August, most grapes were far from ripe. In mid-September, a spell of rain helped accelerate and complete the ripening process. In the second half of September and well into October, the weather remained fine, providing ideal harvesting conditions. Low night-time temperatures helped to extend fermentation times and allow for gradual and gentle extraction, a factor which contributed to the elegance and finesse of the 2016 wines and the quality of the tannins. Picking at Croft's Quinta da Roêda started on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

One of the original founding port houses, Croft traces its origins to 1588 when the company was established in England by Henry Thomson, a member of the Merchants Company of York. The Croft family, which joined the partnership in 1736 and gave the firm its present name, served the port trade with great distinction. A book published by the firm reveals much new research into the company's long and fascinating history. The reputation of Croft as a Vintage Port producer derives to a large extent from its ownership of Quinta da Roêda, one of the finest estates in the Douro Valley, and from such legendary wines as the Croft 1945, recognised as one of the finest of that landmark year. In September 2001, Croft became part of The Fladgate Partnership, the family group which also includes the famous Taylor's and Fonseca port houses.



**QUINTA DA ROÊDA** forms a vast sweep of terraced vineyard located on the north bank of the Douro just upstream from the village of Pinhão. The estate has long been regarded as one of the finest of the Douro Valley estates. The 19<sup>th</sup> century poet Veiga Cabral wrote, 'If the Douro may be called the golden ring of Portugal, then Quinta da Roêda is the diamond set in that ring.' The estate was acquired by Croft in 1889 and was extensively renovated by the firm, with replanting continuing throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since Croft's return to family ownership, with its incorporation into The Fladgate Partnership, the property has again been the source of major investment. This includes the building of traditional lagares (granite treading tanks) allowing the reintroduction of foot treading, still unsurpassed as a method of extraction for Vintage Port. The character of Croft Vintage

Ports is one of the most individual of all. Scented, exotic and crammed with luscious opulent fruit flavour, they develop great richness and complexity with age. Quinta da Roêda is at the heart of this distinctive house style. Its wines always form the base for the Croft Vintage Port blend and, in the case of the 2016, all the components of the blend in fact come from the property, including wines from the estate's extensive terraces of old vines. Before dams tamed the Douro in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it flowed over a series of treacherous, fast running rapids. One of these was located on the curve of the river in front of Quinta da Roêda and the sound of the water rushing over the boulder-strewn riverbed could be heard throughout the vineyard. The name Roêda is said to be derived from the word that described that sound, 'arrueda'.

